

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

Coach DeMeco Ryans

Press Conference



Q. DeMeco, can you talk about the schedule, specifically starting in Baltimore, and then towards the first home game here against the Colts?

DeMECO RYANS: With the schedule, we're excited. You're always excited to see where that first game is, and we get the opportunity to go up to Baltimore versus a very tough team. Lamar Jackson. Going to be a tough matchup. They added some firepower to the offense this off-season.

Great talent for us to start out. We're excited about that. More excited about the home opener where we get the opportunity to play for our hometown, play in front of our fans, and hopefully we can go out against our divisional opponent and put on a good show for the fans of Houston.

We're excited about the schedule and where we are. You know, with that schedule, right, not having any primetime games, you know, that's the one thing that we kind of look forward to.

One thing that I've learned is I've just looked at it as for us as a team, we have to go out and earn, earn our right to be in those primetime moments.

So it was a good opportunity for our team to just go out, put our head down, and work and just prove where we belong. Excited about it.

Q. Just having that first practice with your first round picks, what were your first initial thoughts of Stroud and Anderson?

DeMECO RYANS: First thoughts of the guys that we drafted and all the guys that work, they're eager to work. They're excited to work. They're excited -- they're hungry to get better.

And today with the rookie minicamp starting what we try to get accomplish is just for our guys to get acclimated to what we're doing. There is a lot of different communication, right? Simple things for these guys is

getting in the huddle, saying a play call, coming out of the huddle.

It's the simple things that they have to get used to that's different from the college game where a lot of things are coming from the sideline, a lot of pictures, signal-based things, and they're not used to verbalizing and communicating a lot.

So for us, it's like we're taking them back a couple steps to huddling, making sure they're speaking loudly in the huddle, offensively and defensively, and making sure as a quarterback and linebackers they are commanding those huddles.

It was a good first day. Good initial work with those guys. Excited to see how they can come out tomorrow and just see where they got better.

Q. (Regarding Henry To'o'To'o) with the linebacker. What did you think about his fit, and what did you all learn about during the draft process, what did you learn about him and then now?

DeMECO RYANS: Henry has been a very consistent player. Watching him in Alabama over the years he's been very consistent and a part of a really good defense there. He's a very good communicator, running the show there. They have a lot of calls, checks with that defense.

So just being familiar with it, I have high respect for guys who have to communicate in college because it's an easier transition when they come to our level.

Q. What's the biggest, from this point forward, as far as learning curve or transition, maybe that you can think back to your days, what these guys have to adjust to now as far as getting acclimated here?

DeMECO RYANS: Adjustment. It's the speed of the game. Everything speeds up. Everyone is fast. That's one thing, guys. For me, I know it was speed of the game. It changes. Offensive linemen are much faster. Defensive line, they're faster than you face in the college.



And just how things happen, like the process and everything. Everything has to speed up a tick, so that's one hurdle that the guys have to overcome.

Q. I know you've been out here with the off-season work. It's our first chance to see you on the practice field. Wonder what it's like for you? I know this is the real job now, but what are the emotions like on the field?

DeMECO RYANS: It's exciting to get out on the field and get on the grass and work with guys. That's where I thrive. Now being a head coach I have to learn how to step back a little bit and let the assistance do most of the hands-on work.

If I see a point or two I need to, you know implement, I'll step in. But our assistants, it's awesome for me to get out and see them work, the energy that they bring to practice. Our coaches have done an outstanding job.

You guys seen them a little bit today but just over the past few weeks, working with our veterans, I'm very proud of our coaches and what they've done so far.

Q. You mentioned not having any primetime games. How much do you use that as motivation to show them you guys do deserve that eventually?

DeMECO RYANS: For me, it's not about showing the NFL anything. It's about us as a team just going out, working, and when you humble yourself and you work, you put your head down and work, you're deserving of those things, then they'll come to you.

So that's what it does for me, the internal motivation as opposed to external. We don't have to go out and prove anything to anyone else. It's just about who are we going to be as a team? What are we going to represent when we line up on Sundays?

Q. You talked about it a little bit with your assistant coaches, but what's it like for you now as head coach being able to put that schedule together, getting your coaches together? We know what the players have to get adapted to, but what do you all have to get adapted to as far as this first year?

DeMECO RYANS: It's a matter of us coming together collectively and doing what's best for the Texans. We have a lot of guys coming from a lot of different places. Like we're not trying to replicate what was done somewhere else.

We're trying to implement the things we need, what's best

for our team here. So it's a lot of guys coming together and just communicating on schedules, timing of practice, right, how long we need to be out there.

So all of those things. There are a lot of smart people around here to help me out with that. (Smiling.) Got a lot of good people. Our training staff, the strength staff, a lot of great people here to work with that's made the transition to head coach lost easier.

Q. I think Nick mentioned that Juice Scruggs was a guy -- you coaching staff (indiscernible) Drafting him as well as Jared and Simon, Shaq Mason. What does that say?

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah, with Juice, another guy, kind of spoke on, has been a consistent guy. He's played really good ball. Feel like he has room to improve and be even better. I think he'll be really good in our scheme. He's physical, smart, and proven that in college.

So we're excited to work with Juice, excited to work with Jared. We wanted to add depth to the offensive line. That of one group that we looked at. We had some good guys starting for us, very talented guys, talented group, and to add to that with Shaq, being able to add him and some young guys who are flexible, can play center, guard, having that flexibility among our offensive line group was very important, so that was the reason for moving up to get Juice.

Q. You were asked earlier about your emotions being on the field as head coach. Just want to know, is it a sense of satisfaction seeing these guys -- okay, you lined them up, you drafted them, and now they're in Texans uniform, and now is the chance to start to mold these...

DeMECO RYANS: I wouldn't call it satisfaction. It's the part of -- it's beginning stage of the process. So you watch these guys on film for so long, right? We brought them in. Most the guys we met with whether it's combine or 30 visits, and now it's the next step in the process: getting them here and seeing them actually go out on the field and perform the things that we're asking them to do.

So it's just another part of the process. Definitely excited about just being able to put hands on them and see them in person. That's mostly where I am excited -- what I'm excited about.

Q. Tomorrow we'll get to talk to a couple players about their experience in rookie minicamp, other teams, Richardson, Young, Levis will be talking to the media. Why is CJ Stroud not speaking?

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DeMECO RYANS: We have other players that we drafted. CJ is not the only player that we drafted. So we've got multiple guys we drafted. We want to let you guys talk to all these guys, and CJ will be able throughout the spring, later in the spring, and also in training camp.

So he will be available. So hold your horses, bros.

Q. We get to see very briefly on the field what happens. What happens with these guys the rest of the day? At the very basic level as the introduce these principles of the NFL, what constitutes a good day?

DeMECO RYANS: Well, great question. What happens the rest of the day, these guys come in, and the most important thing is recovery. As you guys saw, there is not many guys out there, so lines are short, so the recovery part is really huge, because we have to come back out tomorrow and practice again.

So getting in the training room, hydration, food whatever they need, and then we'll have more meetings. So we'll have special teams meeting, have individual meetings.

So those guys will come in, be able to watch the film with their coaches, and the coaches will be able to coach them up individually on things they need to improve on, and then we'll have a benchmark for tomorrow to see that actual improvement and show them again after tomorrow's practice.

Q. What constitutes a good day? It's very basic at this point.

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah. A good day is everybody going out, working hard, coming back in with no injuries. That's a great rookie minicamp for me, keeping everyone of healthy.

Q. Update on Kenyon Green and his progress? How is he doing with his workouts? Is he able to run?

DeMECO RYANS: Kenyon is doing fine. He's on the road to recovery. He's doing good.

Q. As somebody who had a position change from when you were playing in college from outside to inside linebacker, and now Will is doing the same thing, the experience of going through those trials and early bumps, what does that do to help his confidence level?

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah, it's a matter of -- and it's not a huge position change for Will. Will will be an edge

defender for us, and that's what he did at Alabama. Mostly at Alabama he was standing up; we'll have him down in a three-point stance. It's not a big time position change for him.

We won't have him playing over the guard like he did some there later in his career, so it's not a huge position change for Will.

Q. Can you talk about what you expect, what you want to see these guys get out of week? Over the years coaches say different things. (Regarding getting around the building.) What's important for them to take from this week?

DeMECO RYANS: Well, this is the first step, get around the building. No, but the most important thing for me, Kim, is for those guys to have a just a general understanding of the terminology, offense, defense terminology.

Learning the offense, it's like learning a new language, so then you have to learn how to speak that language and speak it fluently, especially for CJ stepping in the huddle and making the play calls. How much and how quickly can they grasp the terminology and be able to communicate that effectively on the field?

Q. You did this same thing here 17 years ago. What do you remember about your first rookie camp and just the feeling of day one?

DeMECO RYANS: 17 years ago. Taking me back. (Laughter.)

You know what? I don't remember rookie minicamp. I don't remember much of rookie minicamp. I just remember overall just the spring practices, summer practices. I just remember for me, just how quick practices were, how physical they were, which we can't get physical anymore.

But how physical practices were when we were just in shorts and helmets and how fast things were moving for me. Like coming in, it was just a different speed, and I had to get acclimated quickly if I wanted to keep up. That was one thing I learned, to get rolling very quickly.

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